

October Meeting

Friday, October 19—7:30 pm
Pacificon, The Marriott Hotel
San Ramon

Meeting Program

There will be a brief business meeting, followed by a discussion on, "So you just got your license! Congratulations ... but now what do you do?"

V.E. Testing

There will be no exam testing at the meeting. However, there will be sessions on Saturday and Sunday at Pacificon. See Pacificon.org for more information.

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President's QRM

by Marty Heyman, W6MDH



Welcome to Fall.

It's time for the last of the public service events. The Bike Against the Odds was

held earlier this month and at least two of us from MDARC were on the support team. They had a new record number of participants and raised more money than ever before. The Mount Diablo challenge is coming up and there are never too many volunteers.

We have a full slate of candidates for our annual election of officers. Both Herb Cole, KI6ATB; and Jason Legate, W6SN, are running for President, Dave Mulkearns, K6OH, is running for Vice President, Paul Dickey, N6JOX, is running for Secretary, again, and Don Anthony, N6SIA is also running for Treasurer again. Bob Green, K6GD is running for a second term as Emergency Coordinator. Dave Gordon,

N6SWE, is running to serve a full two-year term as a member of the Board as he was appointed earlier this year to fill the seat opened up when Don Anthony took over as Treasurer. Finally, Trevor Raty, KG6MDW, is running for a second term as Member of the Board. I am pleased so many of these people have volunteered either to take on new responsibilities or to continue their excellent service to the club. I have served with many of them and know most of the others well enough to know that the club will be in good hands in 2008 and beyond.

Just a reminder. Our next club meeting is at the site of Pacificon, the San Ramon Marriott. We haven't assigned a room yet but the meeting will begin at 7:30 PM as usual and the topic for the program will be: "So you've got a license and don't know what to do next?". We're hoping that many of the new hams and some folks planning on getting licenses at Pacificon will come and ask the advice of all our experienced folks.

Get Ready for JOTA!

Jamboree on the Air will celebrate its 50th year this year when it gets on the air October 19-21. Normally a 48 hour event, this year's JOTA will be 50 hours long in recognition of the anniversary. The fun begins at 2200 (local time) October 19 and ends at midnight (local time) October 21.

An on-the-air operating event sponsored by the World Scout Bureau, JOTA was founded in 1958 by Les Mitchell, G3BHK. It has grown to become the largest international Scout event. More than half a million Scouts and Guides in more than 100 countries participate in JOTA, involving as many as 10,000 Amateur Radio stations.

The event relies on the Amateur Radio

community and local hams for its success. Getting Boy and Girl Scouts (including Cubs and Brownies) on the air to talk with other Scouts around the world provides a great opportunity to expose youth to Amateur Radio.

For more information on the 2007 Jamboree on the Air, please visit the ARRL JOTA Web site at <http://www.arrl.org/scouts/jota>.

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The Carrier is a monthly publication of the Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club (MDARC). It is the policy of the editor to publish all material submitted by the membership provided such material is in good taste, relevant to amateur radio and of interest to MDARC members, and space is available. All material must be submitted to the editor by the last day of the month prior to publication. Material is accepted on a first-in, first-out basis. Articles and other material may be submitted via Internet email to carrier@mdarc.org or delivered to the editor at the address listed in the club roster. Material will be accepted in plain ASCII or rich text format (RTF). Material may also be submitted as hardcopy.

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MDARC Club Meeting Minutes

September 21, 2007

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette, CA

President Marty Heyman, W6MDH, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. There were about 50 members and guests present.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as printed in the *Carrier*.

Treasurer Don Anthony, N6SIA, reported that the treasury total was \$46,286.78 in CDs and \$1517.87 in checking.

The Tech Committee reported that:

- All repeaters were up and running OK.
- Repeaters 220 & 440 were linked, as well as 2m & 220.
- The Vollmer site was cleaned up and painted this last weekend, and the Committee will begin to move things in. A 6m antenna was installed. Per an agreement, the site will rent for \$20-\$25 per month. A 2m voter will be installed soon.
- The Vaca site is still under discussion.

The next MDARC monthly meeting will be at Pacificon, at 7:30 p.m., room to be announced. There will be a short business meeting.

EC Bob Green, K6GD, noted that the last Saturday drill went well; the next training meeting will be in November, with basic RACES material.

Jim Brunk, N6BHX, reported for the VEs that 3 Tech and 1 General were successful prior to the meeting. Next month there will be no testing, but testing will be available at Pacificon, with 2 General classes on Sat. and Sun.

Dick Brown, KT6X, announced that Pacificon tickets were available at the meeting, and on the Pacificon website. Dick described Pacificon in

general, and noted that a full hall of exhibits would open at 9:00 a.m.

Marty announced the new membership Chairman was Tom Deeble, KA6SIP. He reported a total of 294 members plus 2 more this evening.

Marty reminded members that the repeaters were for everyone's use, and that during commute times especially, there needed to be more space between conversations, both to let others in and to let the repeater drop. He noted that the intermittent problems on Echolink and IRLP were equipment problems of the service provider, which were to be fixed soon.

Marty noted that in November there would be an election, with two Director slots (Gordon & Raty) to be filled. In addition, the Club needs an Auction Chairman.

Marty recessed the meeting at 8:10 p.m. for 10 minutes prior to the speaker.

Marty reconvened the meeting at 8:20 p.m. for Gary Elliott, WA6KCT, the speaker from the Red Oak Victory group. He described the ship, whose commercial call is KYVM, as in the process of reconditioning. The amateur station on board is K6YVM, also using NY6CI, the old Navy call. He and the other hams in the group work primarily CW, with some AM on original equipment, including working the Museum Ships Weekend. The Red Oak Victory became a Navy ship off-and-on out of the mothball fleet, and saw action in the Leyte Gulf. She was in the Merchant Marine during Korea and Vietnam.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Dickey N6JOX, Secretary

The Lost Art of Talk

Jeff Davis, KE9V

There was a human interest story in our local newspaper not long ago about a fellow who enjoys cooking gourmet meals. One statement made by this fellow really stands out. He said, "I like having a multi-course dinner lasting about five hours with long conversation."

That people might actually linger over dinner and engage in simple conversation has become such an oddity in this crazy world of ours that it's become newsworthy.

These days people seem to prefer instant messaging, text messages, voicemail, and email over actual human to human contact—and I understand that.

I have a good friend who once told me his theory in this regard: whenever he has to deal with someone, whether it be his co-workers, boss, the paperboy, grocery checkout clerk or whatever—that is a "transaction". He went on to tell me that it was his continuing goal to reduce the total number of "transactions" in his quest for a simpler life.

While that may sound cold, I don't think he's much different than the rest of us.

For some reason (and there are many good reasons), most of us have grown to prefer self-checkout lines, the ATM, online banking, drive-up windows, mail order, and Federal Express to having transactions with real, live people who might engage us in some conversation, even if it is chit-chat.

Since ham radio is just a subset of our society, we see the same thing happening in our activities but pointing it out might not be popular.

I guess I'm about to find out. . .

You may have noticed that the fastest growing facet in our hobby at the moment is radio contesting.

Think about that; the modern contest consists of thousands of radio hams exchanging rapid fire bursts of data—and in many cases, this is done by computer. That's easy to imagine when it comes to digital modes and CW, but I recently read an article in the NCJ where one fellow worked a complete phone contest using only computer generated audio—during the phone contest he never uttered a single word—and he seemed rather pleased about it.

I don't bring this up to condemn contesting, far from it! I enjoy the radiosport and am glad to see that it's driving the hobby to new heights. But what does it say about the human "art of conversation" when even in our hobbies we shun it?

Lest you think this is just the nature of contesting, take an honest look at DXing. Two-way exchanges with a DX station or, worse, a DXpedition, are often more rapid fire than during a contest. It's nothing but, "You're 59, thanks, QRZ?"

I once knew a fellow who got into amateur radio late in life and he did

Where has the conversation gone in ham radio?

so because from the time he was a boy he had read about shortwave operators and the DX they regularly worked. He dreamed about long conversations with stations in far-flung parts of the world. And yet, when he finally fulfilled his dream he was disappointed (as many are) to find that there is precious little, if any actual ragchewing done with DX stations. This fellow soon departed the hobby with his life-long dreams broken.

Even if you disagree with my assesment about contesting being the "hottest" thing in the hobby, surely you must concur that DXing and Contesting together account for over 50% of what we hams do—and neither pursuit will get you much credit towards a Rag Chewers Club certificate.

Satellite work is no different. The

fast moving LEO sats are only in radio "view" for 10-15 minutes a pass so exchanges are obviously minimal and rapid fire. And then there are many whose only interest in the amateur satellites is monitoring telemetry data. There's nothing wrong with that pursuit, but it's a one-way data exchange. There's no conversation here.

APRS is all about exchanging position and other telemetry—there's little or no conversation. FM repeaters are typically dead silent these days—no point in even bringing them up. Nets sometimes come close to "conversation," but by their very nature they are a big round-table where conversation is difficult and most who check-in use the tired, old, "checking in for the traffic but no comments for the net tonight" refrain.

Hear me out for a moment and please don't confuse what I'm trying to say. I'm not condemning these activities of ours in the least. If you add a comment to this post that says you "agree that contesting is stupid" then you have completely missed my point.

But I've met testers who told me flat out that one of the reasons they enjoy contesting is that when they get on the air for casual conversation they really don't have much to say. Contesting allows them to have fun with the radio without having to have a conversation.

Sadly, I think we all understand that position clearly as we've all been there before.

Ham radio is just a microcosm of our modern society—so it isn't the fault of the hobby that we've all clammed up—but I'll tell you this, I wouldn't make a long-term investment in any microphone manufacturing company because it seems to me that the future of ham radio will be—silent.

73 de Jeff

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September 3, 2007

Fuddruckers, 1940 N. Main St., Walnut Creek

President Marty Heyman, W6MDH, called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Other Board Members present: Secretary Paul Dickey, N6JOX; Directors Dave Gordon, N6SWE (7:30); and EC Bob Green, K6GD. Chairmen & other members present: Trevor Raty, KG6MDW (and family); Trevor Hall, WA6JAU; Jay Caldis, KT6Y; and Iain MacDonnell, K6IAM (and Maria).

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as published.

Committee Reports:

- Trevor Hall noted that the Tech Committee reduced power to the 440 repeater, until

the situation is clarified. 220 and 440 are linked. Echolink and IRLP are on 2m. The Committee decided to turn off the timer for 2m during commute time. For the early morning nets all repeaters are linked, as well as for Thursday nights. The Board approved the Committee decisions.

- The Board thanked Trevor Raty for his work on the repeater. The deviation has been changed to 4.0 from 4.8 on the advice of NARCC.

Marty adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Paul Dickey N6JOX, Secretary*

MDARC Election Notes

Officer election is once again upon us. We will be voting on all offices of the club in the November meeting. For a list of those running for office, see the President's QRM on page 1. Each member will receive a ballot by mail, which you should fill out and return by mail, or bring directly to the November meeting.

Any member in good standing is eligible to run for office. New members are more than welcome to participate—coaching is available! If you would like to nominate/volunteer, please contact Marty Heyman, W6MDH.

Editor's Exciter

by Jeremiah R. Blasi, K6BQ

This issue of the *Carrier* marks 13 editions that I have put out. It's hard to believe that it's been over a year. I hope that the members have enjoyed reading the newsletter each month. I do enjoy putting it together each month.

However, as with any worthwhile endeavors, it can't be done alone. I need your help! I appreciate those who have submitted materials; they are the people that make the job easy and enjoyable. But there is room for more creativity. There is so much that I would like to do with this paper, but it is difficult to find the time to do it. So, I am always open for your help and input. It could be as simple as suggesting a topic that would be of interest to the membership. Or, you could go the extra mile and write an article!

As a side note, a kind club member, whose name and call I failed to write down, and have subsequently forgotten, pointed out several errors in last month's edition. A number of dates were in error. For these mistakes, I humbly apologize, and hope that no one's schedule was confused as a result! I'm usually more of a perfectionist, and do not like making that kind of mistake, but between my addled brain, and the "Find/Replace" feature, they slipped through!

Enjoy the month, and have a great time at Pacificon!

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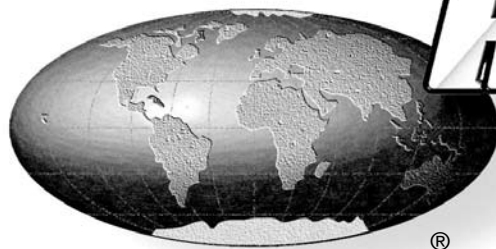
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Thursday 8:00 pm

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October Events

October 19-21

7:30 pm



See pacificon.org for more information.

October 29

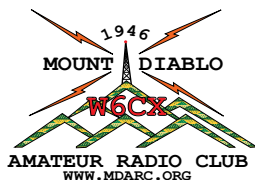
November Carrier Deadline

November 5

7:00 pm

MDARC Board Meeting

Fuddrucker's, 1940 N. Main St., Walnut Creek



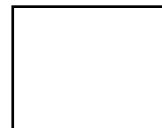
The Carrier

Newsletter of the Mt. Diablo Amateur Radio Club

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Pacificon—October 19-21 @ The Marriott, San Ramon
